#### Fall 2002

#### **Councilmember Jane Hague**

# County Report

METROPOLITAN
KING COUNTY
COUNCIL
DISTRICT 11

Dear Neighbors,

Our decennial redistricting process has moved many of you within District 11 boundaries – Welcome! For those of you who remain, please accept my continuing service. I encourage you to visit my website at: www.metrokc.gov/mkcc/Members/d11 to review more details and issues relevant to King County, the Eastside and my duties on your behalf. As always, my goal as a County Councilmember is to make our governmental body more understandable, accountable and accessible to the people it represents.

With a change to Democratic leadership by a 7-6 margin, I was appointed Chair of the Growth Management & Unincorporated Areas Committee and Vice Chair of both the Budget & Fiscal Management Committee and the Utilities Committee. I serve on the Council's Strategic Advisory Committee and the Labor, Operations and Technology Committee. Additionally, I am Board member to the following outside committees: Sound Transit, Eastside Transportation Partnership, Growth Management Planning Council and its Executive Committee, Puget Sound Regional Council Growth Management Policy

Board, Puget Sound Regional Council Operations Committee, the Executive Committee of the National Association of Counties and the Washington State Association of Counties Board of Directors.

King County government faces unprecedented budget challenges throughout this year and the two years following. We refer to it as "the perfect storm" where labor issues, economic downturn, statewide initiatives, unfunded and new mandates will change the way we do business as a county. I hope to work with you and my colleagues in government to find better and more efficient ways to serve you.

It is an honor for me to have been your King County Councilmember for the past eight years. I look forward to working with you over the next four years to enhance our community with sound financial policies and an increased level of service.

At your service,







516 THIRD AVE. SEATTLE, WA 98104 206-296-1011

Please visit my website @ www.metrokc.gov/mkcc

### KING COUNTY BUDGET

## The reasons for the county's budget crisis

You've seen the headlines and read the stories — parks are threatening to close, public defense costs on the Ridgeway trial are skyrocketing, human services are being cut, public safety costs are consuming the County's available dollars – WHAT **GIVES?** 

The crisis is real! At least it is very real for those budget categories that **ARE NOT** supported by dedicated revenues and/or fees - the 83% of the total budget that we cannot legally move from one category to another. The headlines are ad-

\$7 M or 1%

\$29 M or 6%

**Physical Environment:** 

dressing only those services that must be covered out of the 17% of the budget, the County's "Current Expense Fund" or

general fund. And, even that remaining 17% is governed by many state mandates requiring us to provide certain services such as public safety (Sheriff's Department, the jail, the courts).

Public safety is our 800 lb. gorilla. It is mandated in our charter and the State Constitution, and it is consuming an ever larger portion of that 17% pie. When we are suddenly hit with unexpected, but legally mandated expenses such as funding State v. Ridgeway, there is no where to go for those funds except from programs that are not mandated such as parks and human services.

Meanwhile, growth of general fund revenues are diminished as annexations and incorporations have reduced the county's collection of sales tax by 85%.

Our challenge will be to find new ways to do business at the County! Regional cooperation is a must, and we will need to view our cities as partners in an effort to continue to provide the services that our citizens expect from their local government.

#### **General Fund Expenditures**

2002 Adopted Budget = \$497 million

**Health & Human Services General Government** \$36M or 7% \$89 M or 18% Capital Improvements Law, Safety & Justice \$336 M or 68% Parks & Dept. of Development and Environmental Services

> We will need to look at out sourcing some services and delivering others in new ways.

As Vice Chair of the Council's Budget Committee, I pledge to do my best to make County government work for you. I'll be open to new ideas, perhaps even heretical ideas. I'll be vigilant in seeking ways that we can make our general fund agencies

more efficient and cost effective. And, wherever possible, I'll use my position at the King County Council to sponsor and promote legislation that will address our most crucial budget issues.

As an example, I sponsored legislation authorizing the County Executive to expand the County's work crew program to include basic public parks maintenance. This legislation has a double budget whammy. By utilizing work crews for certain

> parks maintenance tasks, we can reduce the overall cost of keeping some of our parks open, and, concurrently, we are reducing the number of jail beds utilized, thus lowering jail costs as well.

An important aspect of this legislation is that the work crews are made up only of misdemeanants – those convicted of low level crimes such as driving without a license. This option was a major recommendation from the citizen led Metropolitan Parks Task Force.

The Seattle Times editorialized that it is "a promising proposal to re-open parks closed during the budget crisis." I call it "thinking outside the box."



## PARK CLOSURES IN THE NEWS

# Hague works for creative solutions on Eastside

Parks issues will require us as policymakers to think creatively



about new ways to preserve our public

resources throughout the county. My first priority, however, will always be to the people and facilities of District 11. And, here a bad news story is quickly becoming a good news story. Here are some of the highlights of our accomplishments to preserve these facilities for your use:

#### Juanita Beach Park has been transferred to the City of Kirkland.

Kirkland has proven itself to be an excellent caretaker for its parks and recreational facilities. I was pleased to sponsor this legislation authorizing this transfer in November and it awaits the outcome of a bond issue to the voters of Kirkland.

O O Denny Park is identified as a site for pilot programs to test work crews and other potential solutions to the parks funding crisis. O O Denny Park is an incredible resource for the entire eastside, but for those residents of the Finn Hill and Holmes Point areas, it is a part of the fabric of their daily lives. It's a site for neighborhood picnics, a place where residents' children while away summer afternoons. Closed at the first of the year, I have worked to get the gates back open and to increase basic maintenance. It is an ideal facility to conduct a work crew pilot program.

**Ultimately, a new parks district is likely for the Finn Hill/Holmes Point area.** Citizens in this area of unincorporated King County are placing a proposal on the November ballot to form their own park district, tax themselves and thus ensure the future of the parks within their region.

The fish ladder at O O Denny Park will be dedicated this month. A three year effort, led by my office and involving the Denny Creek Neighborhood Alliance, and county, state and federal officials, has at last become reality. It has been a textbook project and I am so very proud of my constituents who marshaled thousands of hours of volunteer time as well as working to raise the public and private dollars needed.

**Bridle Trails State Park was pulled off the list of parks to be closed by the state.** I testified before state officials, outlining the unique characteristics of this park, the terrific support it enjoys from the community around it and requesting that the state seek other alternatives to closure.



Salmon are expected to begin returning to the creek as early as this fall with hatchery coho salmon returning within three to five years.



Councilmember Hague congratulates Jim Sproul (left), biologist and retired high school science teacher and George Ploudre, retired civil engineer, are volunteers who were crucial to the fish ladder project.

#### **JANE HAGUE**

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## **GET INVOLVED IN OUR COMMUNITY**

"The human contribution is the essential ingredient. It is only in the giving of oneself to others that we truly live."

— Ethel Percy Andrus

There are so many non-profit organizations on the eastside that need volunteers, especially during our local and state budget crises. See our website for a small listing of organizations needing volunteers. <u>District 11 web site</u> and select "Links": www.metrokc.gov/mkcc/Members/d11

## **INFORMATION YOU CAN USE**

Councilmember Jane Hague	(206) 296-1011	TRANSPORTATION-RELATED INFO.
King County Information Line	296-0100	Metro 24-Hour Rider Information 553-3000
CRISIS HOTLINES  24 Hour Helpline Alcohol and Substance Abuse Animal Control Complaints Child Abuse Hotline Non-Emergency Calls for King County Police Sexual Assault: 24-Hour Crisis Line	722-3700 296-7615 296-PETS 1-800-422-4453 296-3311 1-800-825-7273 or 226-7273	Potholes or Garbage on County Roads King County Dept. of Transportation: News and information site: www.metrokc.gov/kcdot/ news/thisweek.htm Regional Transportation alert and news e-mail service: webapp.metrokc.gov/rpin Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org Washington State Department of Transportation
Code Enforcement Hotline	1-888-437-4771	(WSDOT): www.wsdot.wa.gov

## **BEYOND THE HEADLINES**

## Transportation issues front and center

While the headlines continue to blare of budget woes and the dire consequences of cutbacks in county services, I, and my staff, spend a great deal of our time addressing issues that matter to the constituents we serve in District 11. Many of those issues are transportation issues – not so much the billion dollar issues that are in the headlines and are soon to be on the ballot, but the traffic, road and transit issues that affect your daily lives and those of your neighbors down the street. Here is

a rundown of some of the transportation projects many of you recently worked with me to initiate:

# Overlake Transit Center:

The grand opening for transit operation of this center took place in February of 2002.



Councilmember Jane Hague addresses citizen's concerns during a recent visit to 84th Ave.

#### **RIDGWAY TRIAL**

#### The cost of his defense

How ironic! We are closing parks, we cutting back nearly all human services – but, we are authorizing \$1.9 million in additional costs - for a total of \$2.7 million - to provide an adequate legal defense for Gary Ridgway? How can that be?

It certainly wasn't an easy decision for a majority of us on the King County Council to make. But, we received a court order from Judge Richard Jones to appropriate these funds. Jones, in turn, was following the recommendation of the Special Master assigned to this trial. We definitely would prefer not to have to add this \$1.9 million to our already sizeable budget deficit for 2003.

The bottom line, however, is that if the County were to defy a court order, it would be charged with contempt of court and forced into a lawsuit – costing the County another unknown amount of money.

We did, however, place simultaneous provisions within the appropriation to clarify how this case is unique and that its intent is <u>not</u> to use this trial as a precedent for exorbitant defense costs in future murder trials. A wise move, it would seem, since one such attempt has already been struck down in Superior Court.

On May 14th, many of us, county and city local officials, celebrated the opening of the park and ride lot for this facility. Please check it out and check the Metro or Sound Transit web sites for how you can use the routes that run through this wonderful transit center.

# Bellevue Multi-Modal Transit Center:

And in Bellevue, expansion and reconstruction of the existing Bellevue transit center is now complete. You can expect improved transit service coordinating with the Bellevue I-405 HOV Direct Access project. A gala dedication is planned for late October.

## **BEYOND THE HEADLINES**

## Transportation issues front and center

#### Northeast 124th Street Signal Interconnect:

Interconnection of signals and installation of cameras in the Northshore area corridor is taking place. This will improve management of the corridor, especially during peak hours.

#### **Road Improvement District:**

Based on constituent requests and with my urging, the King County Council passed legislation on July 22<sup>nd</sup> to create Road Improvement District (RID) 131. This RID was formed by citizen request and directs the County to take over maintenance of the area's private road. The boundaries of RID 131 are N.E. 138th Place and 64th Place N.E., south of St. Edwards State Park.

#### **Champagne Point Road:**

Under my sponsorship legislation was passed by the King County Council on July 22nd to change numerical street names in the Champagne Point area back to their original namesake. The changes include the names of 76th Avenue NE, NE 112th Street & 73rd Avenue NE to Champagne Point Road NE. Also, changing the name of 75th Avenue NE to Champagne Point Lane NE, and changing the name of a portion of NE 112th Street to NE Champagne Point Place.

#### Juanita-Woodinville Way:

Your concerns about speeding on Juanita-Woodinville Way were made clear when two teenagers were tragically killed while trying to cross this busy street. Citizens called for action, and in response I created a Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) to develop solutions for speed control. From flashing lights on the pavement for crosswalks, to the installation of four speed-warning signs along 108th Avenue NE, solutions have been implemented to address the speeding problems on and around Juanita-Woodinville Way.



This intersection in the Finn Hill neighborhood is the site of a fatal pedestrian and automobile accident, where a teenager lost his life, when struck by a speeding car.

#### 84th Avenue NE:

Residents who live on or near Kirkland's 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE have been concerned about speeding issues, and especially about safety concerns of children walking to their schools located on 84<sup>th</sup>. In response I added a provision in 2001 to the 2002 Roads Department Budget, to study pedestrian safety on the 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE corridor to and around its schools. The study results are being compiled and a report will be ready soon.

In addition, a fatal accident occurred in the South Finn Hill end of 84<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE at the end of June, 2002. Citizens cried out for solutions. I met with concerned neighbors three times within the two months following the accident. I am working to implement both short and long term solutions to serious speeding problems at the southern end of 84<sup>th</sup> through increased patrols, neighborhood speed watches and more.